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HONEY
PRODUCER

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BEESWAX

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Honey Producer

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This Journal is owned and edited by W. B. BRAY. All Communications to be addressed to THE EDITOR, Box 7, Barry's Bay, via Christchurch for South Island Letters, and via Little River for North Island Letters.

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No. 8

Editorial

In the absence of any organised effort to regulate supplies to the local market on a basis profitable to the producer and in view of the changed conditions in regard to advances against exports, we would urge every one of our readers to do his or her best to uphold at least the prices ruling last year. Any further fall would be disastrous. If you feel panicky about the prospects, remember that the trade are probably quite unaware of the position. In the daily papers the honey export trade is getting the sort of publicity which makes it appear that New Zealand honey is selling faster than it arrives. The trade are not aware that the reverse is the case, and it will be the fault of the beekeepers if the trade discover that honey producers are in a panic to sell their honey. Firm holders make a firm market, and a panic on the part of the holders creates a panic amongst the buyers. No buyer wants to see the price go down after he has bought, and nothing will make him so shy of buying as the prospect of prices falling. Therefore, the first sign of weakness on the part of the seller is fatal. Remember that there are twelve months yet in which to dispose of the crop. Ay, there

may be more than twelve months, so don't worry to get it all sold. New Zealand as a whole has experienced a third consecutive good honey crop, and it is quite probable that next season the crop will be smaller. It would, therefore, be a foolish policy to turn all the crop into cash now at a sacrifice, and arrive at a lean year with a lean purse and no honey to sell at good prices ruling. Those who take a long view of the situation, and selling no more than enough to carry on with, and then only at a firm price, will help themselves and everyone else to come out better in the end.

A few weeks ago a large producer who would not sign the marketing agreement canvassed the trade in Christchurch to sell the prospective crop at 4½d. Though this producer had a record crop the year before, all he could offer was the prospective crop. And at 4½d. he could not make a sale. Yet, on the other hand, another producer holding last season's honey, being asked to quote to a buyer outside Christchurch, quoted 5½d. in bulk, delivered Wellington. The buyer was looking for honey at about 5d., so no sale eventuated. But a fortnight later this buyer had been unable to get hold of honey

for immediate delivery. We do not know whether he had been offered futures at 4½d., but we do know that he was very glad to close on the quotation at 5½d., and now he is looking for more of new season's from the same source.

Now, what is a firm price? In the above case it was 5½d. because the seller remained firm at the price he quoted. He would not budge, although practically invited to come down to 5d. Had he come down to 5d. that buyer would try the next seller at 4½d. in the same way, and perhaps he would discover that holders are weak. Remember, too, that it is part of the buyer's game to quote fictitious offers he has had. The revised version of "All is fair in love and war" will have the addition "and trade."

There is a far better chance of holding prices firm if beekeepers, instead of disclosing to the trade the quantity they have on hand, will ask the buyer how much he wants, and quote on that quantity only. There is no need to hide the fact that further stocks are still held. The buyer respects a man who can hold his produce, and he goes to him again when he wants more.

Everything comes to him who waits. There is a great deal of satisfaction in getting repeat orders.

Within the last few weeks an advertisement has been appearing in the local papers wanting to buy honey in ton lots suitable for export, up to 6½d. for top grade being quoted. As "Honey," care of a box number, was the address given, there was no indication as to who the buyer is. As yet we have not heard of anyone who has made a sale. As the price held out is considerably above ruling prices, we are tempted to guess that the advertiser is perhaps buying under in-

structions from a Home buyer, who wants supplies of new season's honey direct without buying through the Control Boards' agents. The price is on a parity with prices quoted for bulk at Home. On the other hand, it may be a local buyer seeking information as to the amount of honey offering. However, we hope it is a sign of good times ahead, and that sellers will be helped by it to hold their supplies firm for a good price.

In discussing this marketing problem we fear that we have been guilty of almost forgetting the existence of the H.P.A., the honey producers' own organisation, which, as far as the local market is concerned, might be called the producers' disorganisation. With the loyal support of every producer, the H.P.A. could do what no one of us can do independently, and it can do it more certainly than the individuals can, however much they try to work on common lines.

THE LONDON AGENCY.

Cabled advice has been received from the Chairman of the Honey Export Control Board that as from 1st April next Messrs. C. & E. Morton take over the agency for New Zealand honey, the depot, London stocks, and all liabilities. All selling arrangements will be the same as formerly. The advances will not be quite on the same scale, but sufficient to enable the H.P.A. to pay out up to 50 per cent. of last season's advance, and a further 25 per cent. within six months. The agency will apply only to the United Kingdom and Ireland. Arrangements for continuing the Continental business have apparently not been finalised yet.

Mortons are a very large firm of packers, with a world-wide business, and they will be able to give a much more extensive service direct to the retail trade. Their excellent business standing is vouched for by the Board's bankers, the Chamber of Commerce, London, and the High Commissioner's Office.

Latest London News.

Just as we go to press we learn of important changes being made in the London agency as the result of the visit of the Chairman of the Control Board, Mr. J. Rintoul, to London. Messrs. Mills & Co., who some eight years ago initiated the New Zealand Imperial Bee Agency, have done an immense amount of spadework in breaking new ground. Lately the business has grown to such an extent that it entailed an immense amount of attention to detail work, for which their organisation as dairy produce brokers was not exactly suitable. Therefore they called Mr. Rintoul to London to consult with him as to the advisability of handing over the agency to a firm who were better fitted to give more attention to details and a more direct connection with the retail trade.

That Messrs. Mills & Co. were sincere in their efforts to further the interests of New Zealand beekeepers is evidenced by the fact that they recognised the limitations of the service they were able to give, and of their own accord offered to give way to another firm, who were not rivals, but rather operating in a different sphere. The change will not be in any way detrimental to the system of marketing New Zealand honey overseas, but rather will it be an improvement by putting our honey in more direct contact with the retail trade. Those producers who have declaimed against the middlemen will derive some satisfaction from this, though they must recognise now that the middleman can sacrifice himself when he finds he is in the way. The producers must always remain grateful to Messrs. Mills & Co. for having built up such a valuable asset as the goodwill for New Zealand Imperial Bee Honey

which we are sure is going to grow into a still greater asset under the new agents.

While the advances are not as lavish as formerly, producers can now feel assured that the final payments will begin to improve. The policy of lower advances is a sound one, as the saving of interest will alone help to increase the final returns. Altogether, the industry can be congratulated on the improved prospects.

FIELD DAY.

The Canterbury Branch of the National held its annual field day at Mr. T. Pearson's apiary at Tai Tapu on Saturday, 1st February. The weather during the week had been wet and distinctly unpromising for the Saturday, but a better day could not have been desired. There was a good attendance of beekeepers and visitors. Amongst those present was Mr. E. A. Earp, Senior Apiary Instructor, who in a short address referred to the progress that the industry was making. He said that the new Apiaries Act was proving most valuable in the campaign for the stamping out of disease. Whole districts in Southland which once were infected were now clear of disease. Altogether, there were 50 part-time inspectors at work this season, and their assistance was most valuable, as it enabled return visits to be made within a reasonable time, which had a good effect on the careless beekeeper. Mr. Earp also referred to the signs of progress which were evident everywhere in the way of better equipment. Many beekeepers were building substantial honey houses, and installing power and other improved equipment.

Mr. Ecroyd demonstrated an electric boiler for the hot uncapping knife.

After a discussion on the marketing question, the following resolution, moved by Mr. H. A. Taege, was carried unanimously:—"That this meeting of the Canterbury Branch requests the Government to amend the Honey Export Control Act to enable control to be applied to the local market."

Southland field day was held recently and a resolution in favour of compulsory control of the local market was carried unanimously.

Selling Honey.

(Continued.)

In selling to a retailer, especially one who runs a big shop at cut prices and buys in ton lots, it is most important to sell at a high enough price to stop him from cutting the general retail price. While it appears good business to unload a ton or two of bulk at a price better than export values, it must be remembered that when this honey is retailed at a figure below that of other retailers who cannot sell so low, it clogs the market, and brings the price down generally, making it more difficult to maintain the price in future seasons.

It is jealousy which prompts producers to cut the price to these buyers. They hate to see another sell a ton at more than bedrock price. If they could only see it, they are far better off in the end, even if their neighbour does get a penny a pound more for a ton like that, because it enables them eventually to get a fair price for their crop, though they may have to wait longer for it. The buyers play on the jealousies of producers, and are not above fanning the flames by overstating quantities offered and understating the prices it is offered at.

I believe it is really a great mistake to sell bulk to the trade. It is anything but a good advertisement to see blocks of honey in a grocer's window or on the counter being cut into blocks and wrapped. It puts many people off honey altogether. The honey has no individuality or reputation, and the grocer may have difficulty in always getting the same quality or flavour. Who would buy a chunk of butter nowadays? In spite of the cheapness of farmers' butter, the sales of it are infinitesimal compared to factory butter. The vast majority of housewives prefer to buy the best. Price is not so much the consideration as quality. If the quality is right they pay the price, especially if the price is standard.

Honey producers, therefore, should work on the lines of educating the public to buy a standard quality in a standard package. To do so they must retain the packing in their own hands or in the hands of their own organisation, such as the H.P.A. While the ideal method would be to blend all honeys to three or four standard packs, all sold under one brand with different coloured labels so as to concentrate all advertising on the one brand, the time

is not yet ripe for that. In the meantime, human nature being what it is, we must take the long, laborious way of many packs. However, it will be a step in the right direction. Every producer has his first and best market in his immediate neighbourhood. He should sell as much as possible at his own door, and see that the grocers in his neighbourhood carry a stock of his honey. It is no use approaching the grocer unless the price to him enables him to sell it at the price charged by the producer at his door. Give the grocer 20 per cent. of the retail price, and he is satisfied. He will be interested in pushing the line, and he will reach many customers who would never call at the apiary for honey. By buying the honey ready packed the grocer knows exactly what he is doing. The producer's name on the package, too, is a guarantee to him and to his customer, and so long as the producer maintains the quality it has a goodwill value to him. This is where the great advantage of retaining the packing in their own hands and under their own names comes in to the producers. When the public demand a particular brand or name because they are satisfied with the quality, then the producer of that pack is in a stronger position. The grocer may try a cheaper line, but when he finds his customers refuse it he is glad to come back for the other.

Another reason why every producer should aim to sell as much as possible in his own district is that there is a tendency on the part of country people to buy the "home grown" article. Much more of the local honey can be sold in a district direct to consumers and through the store than if the producers send all their output to a large centre to be packed, whether by a wholesaler or by their own H.P.A. Not nearly such a quantity will filter back through ordinary trade channels. For this reason producers will always need to pack a certain quantity for their immediate neighbourhood. It is here that the 5 pound tin with handle (and 10) will play an important part. Now that they can be obtained printed in coloured designs with the producer's name, honey can be offered in a much more attractive way. These tins will make sales. The essence of establishing sales with quick repeats is a standard convenient and attractive package always at hand. People will buy freely and often when they know exactly what to send for and can get it without delay.

The returned empty is the bugbear of the door sales. Every producer knows the person who brings his empty tin and wants it filled at a reduced price or hands over an empty tin expecting to get credit for it on the new one. I resolutely set my face against that sort of thing. First I tell them that I keep the honey ready packed in new tins, and nobody gets anybody else's second-hand tin; that I cannot keep track of anybody's particular tin to let him have it again, therefore I cannot take it in; and lastly, that if I wanted to it would be against the Health Department's regulations to use a second-hand package. In the end, most people appreciate getting their honey in new tins.

W. B. B.

(To be continued.)

THE MONTH'S WORK.

Extracting will be in full swing this month, and as the honey flow draws to a close the foundations for next season's chances are being laid, firstly as to the amount of winter stores being left, and secondly as to conserving bee life by avoiding robbing. Under proper management, as explained previously under Robbing, it is possible to keep the bees so quiet that one can walk bareheaded in the apiary on any fine day. It is also possible to open the hives for re-queening purposes without causing undue trouble. If the apiary is allowed to get into such an uproar that it is impossible to open a hive without a cloud of robbers setting to work in the hive, it is a waste of time trying to re-queen. This is as good a time as any in which to re-queen, but success in introducing and in maintaining the strength of the colonies depends on the tranquillity of apiary when the honey flow ceases.

Experience and knowledge of one's district must be the guide in determining what quantity of stores to leave. If reliable sources of nectar are available before the next main flow, less stores are required. Indeed, there are districts where winter and spring flows are so stimulating that it is advisable to keep the bees on short rations for winter. On the other hand, there are many districts where there is practically nothing from clover to clover, in which case it is hardly possible to leave too much. There should be at least one full super, with as much more as the bees can cram into the brood chamber.

W. B. B.

WHAT TO LEAVE FOR WINTER STORES.

In his notes on apiary work for August, in the August issue, Mr Gibb says that a colony should have thirty to forty pounds of honey to last from August until the flow commences. For the average side-liner whose colonies are headed by old queens and left to themselves, it may be sufficient. But to one who sees that his colonies are strong and headed by young Italian queens, sixty pounds, and even 100, according to strength of colony, are required by the time the flow starts. Possibly where the apiary is near native bush thirty to forty pounds may be enough. But out on the Canterbury plains there is very little to depend on after the clover flow till clover yields the following year. Even willows are not dependable. Most books say thirty pounds is enough, but if writers could be induced to say sixty pounds there would be less losses from starvation and greater yields of surplus honey. These remarks apply only to the stores left in August after the winter is over, so it will be seen that the amount of stores to be left for winter must be considerably more, at least twenty pounds more.

The following is an instance of the difference between a beekeeper and a side-liner, one who depended on his bees for a living and the other a neighbouring farmer. Each had 140 colonies. One produced ten tons of honey and the other two tons.

G.H.

(Editor's note.—Mr H. brings out a most important point. The dependable sources of nectar in the spring must be taken into account when deciding what to leave for winter, and it is better to err on the safe side. The Plains beekeeper has his special problem—to bring the bees through from clover to clover with practically nothing to stimulate them. In bush districts the problem is to keep the colonies from becoming too strong too early in the season. In northern bush districts much of the native flora produces early honey which boosts the brood rearing along too quickly. This question emphasises the difficulties of attempting to give general advice for spring management in New Zealand where there are so many contrasts in climate. In Auckland the bees are filling sections when in Southland it is too cold for the bees to break the winter cluster for months on end.)

Honey Houses and Other Matters.

In response to your request that bee-keepers render some assistance on the producing side I am submitting the following:—Perhaps a chat about honey houses, etc., will interest at least some readers. The honey house I have used previous to this season is only 10ft x 10ft with a 10ft x 8ft shed attached for storing supers of empty combs. This building is far too small and inconvenient. Especially inconvenient when cool weather made it necessary to have the stove going, for then the beekeeper got warmed up along with the honey combs. The attached comb store room was of course also too small and I had to cart more than half my comb super down home for storage.

This honey house is about half a mile from my home and workshop and shed, and I was continually carting empty tins, supers, etc., up to the honey house and carting back tins of honey, etc., so I could case them at the workshop.

I used a four frame hand power extractor, uncapping can (held cappings from $\frac{1}{2}$ ton of honey) and only one tank holding about 7cwt.

I have purchased 5 acres close at hand and built a new honey house. The experience gained from working in an unsuitable honey house came in very useful when designing this new one. I also received very valuable hints from Mr Fix, our apiary instructor, also a good look through Messrs Woods Bros' splendid honey house at Rangiora was informative.

You, Mr Editor, also answered very completely numerous questions I asked you by letter and gave me many useful bits of information. Mr Fix paid us a visit just as we were ready to put in the concrete, and acting upon his advice I made my tank room 12 x 12 instead of 12 x 8, and I find that 12 x 12 is not a bit too large. My intention is:—To have my home apiary, honey house, store room, workshop, garage and dwelling all on the 5 acres and thus have everything right at hand all the time and avoid all the bike rides to and from the apiary as well as all the time and labour lost by carting back and forth. All honey from the out-apiaries will be brought in for extraction.

Now, a brief description of my new honey house. We have concrete floors

throughout and the walls are made of galvanised flat iron 26 gauge, the roof is usual galvanised corrugated iron with board sarking and building paper under the iron.

The tank room is 12 x 12, extracting room 12 x 10, and comb room 8 x 6. We will build on a store room for honey only, when we get time, and this room is to be 22 x 12 with a staging from the doorway so we can run the cases of honey straight on to the truck (we have built on a raised piece of ground and can back the truck up to the staging, thus having truck and floor on one level).

The extractor (8 fr. power) is 4ft $2\frac{1}{2}$ in from floor level. Staging where we uncaps is 3ft 4in from floor. The tanks in next room are $5\frac{1}{2}$ in below level of the extractor and the honey runs direct into the tanks from the extractor (not dropped in though). The 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ h.p. engine is right under the extractor and well out of our way (I run a dynamo when extracting and charge up my accumulators). The comb room is the handiest and best item of the lot, for we can heat up the honey and bring it into the extracting room as required. The extracting room can thus be kept reasonably cool yet we have the honey nice and warm. This small room is easily heated even in cold weather, for instance we had our comb room at 100 and more one cold wet day and extracted honey that was 1.435, two hours after being tanked, and temperature of honey 80 degrees. This honey was all in new combs built from foundation this season and the honey much thicker than usual, yet we put it through without the loss of any combs. I made myself a capping press, using the screw gear from an old Root Press, and after a fair trial am very pleased with it. The press does not squeeze out all the honey, but gets far more than the uncapping tank drains off. Each drum (or container) holds capping from 10 supers and this presses down to $2\frac{1}{2}$ in thick x $14\frac{1}{2}$ in diameter. By using two drums, uncapping and extracting is not stopped, for by the time one drum is being filled the other is pressed and ready for removal. The stove in the comb room serves another purpose besides heating the combs of honey, for we use a Baines melter on it and get rid of the pressed cappings as fast as they leave the press, thus getting the wax in shape ready for market and also the little honey left in the

pressings. This honey is kept separate and not put into the extracted. You beekeepers blessed with electric supply can laugh at our method, but we have to do as best we can with a petrol or kerosene heater; we can run an electric light from accumulators, but that's our limit. The plant described is for two men, one uncapping and the other bringing in and taking out supers, attending to extractor, press, melter, etc. We can bump out 3 cwt an hour quite comfortably and, after the old hand extractor, extracting is now a pleasure rather than hard work.

We have three tanks 4ft x 3ft x 23in deep holding 16cwt each (also the 7cwt tank), so now we should be able to score higher points, as regards scum especially.

We intend placing our hives on concrete stands, each stand holding a group of four hives (I tried out groups of five but found it too inconvenient). A concrete stand 4ft 6in square will take four colonies nicely, and I prefer this arrangement to any I have yet tried out.

As regards prospects in these parts, well, they are anyhow.

We have 5 tons off and are now waiting for the bees to fill up supers. Still plenty of clover but have yet to see a decent honey flow. If weather conditions are suitable after this present cold spell, the bees are capable of gathering a few more tons, but so far this season it has been a repetition of rain followed by strong nor-westers.

Last season I merely took off my honey supers and left them alongside the hives till free of bees; none of that short cutting is allowable this season, for even when using escapes all crevices must be carefully closed or robbers will be into the honey. In one sense we are better off having our own extracting plant about a quarter of a mile from the present home apiary for we can be a little more careless than if among the bees.

The bees are gathering slowly but surely and not having a rush flow gives us a good chance to requeen. We have used up all our new queens and started rearing some more so that we can requeen every hive not up to the standard.

What are we going to do now the H.P.A. marketing contracts have been turned down? Looks as if we must follow Australia's lead. If the H.P.A. pay out only half usual advance (quite right too) and the local market drops

to 3d or 3½d (very likely too) well perhaps then we will do some hard thinking and act. I have filled (or am filling) a larger order on the understanding that price will be arranged later on. Nice business, isn't it?

Of course neither the buyer or myself could come at a price until such time as the beekeeper willing to undersell all others sets the price for this season's honey on the local market, and in the meantime we can look on and wait results from an unorganised market.

I hope this open out on my part will be followed up by others; we can all learn more about our occupation and by each airing his views individual beekeepers can sort out the points to suit his conditions. If we cannot have an organised market we certainly require to learn all we can about the cheapest method of production.

Yours faithfully,

C. A. OLDMAN.

Allow me to congratulate you on high standard of your journal, even if it is from your own pen only, it's good.—C.A.O.

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Compulsory Marketing.

AN EXAMPLE FROM QUEENSLAND.

Queensland primary producers have evolved a system of marketing which is apparently giving general satisfaction, judging by the way the producers of various products are taking advantage of the legislation provided for them. The Government in 1922 passed a Primary Products Pools Act and a Primary Producers' Organisation Act, with amendments in 1925. In 1926 these two Acts were amended and consolidated in the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act, which with further amendments made in 1928 is now in force.

It provides for the setting up of Special Boards representing the producers of any one primary product or a group of products. The Board is set up on the petition of fifty producers, but it is first advertised for a month to give fifty producers the opportunity to petition for a poll to be taken. If a petition is received a poll of all producers concerned is taken, and a three-fifths majority is necessary to secure the setting up of the Board. Failing a petition, the Board is constituted in due course. The Board may be constituted with or without marketing powers, but if at a later date the addition of marketing power is sought, the same procedure as to petition and poll applies before the marketing power can be obtained.

The Governor in Council appoints the first Board, but he makes regulations to provide for the election of members as time goes on.

The compulsory marketing power of these Boards is the most important part of the Act, and the part which beekeepers in New Zealand should be most interested in at the present time.

In many respects a Board has all the functions of a limited liability company.

There is a penalty of £500 for selling to or buying from any person other than the Board, so one transaction outside the Board could produce £1000 in fines. A Board "may, in such cases and on such terms as may be prescribed or approved by the Minister, exempt (either generally or in any particular case) from the operation of this section (compulsory supply)—

(a) Such small growers of the community as the Board think fit.

- (b) Sales of the commodity direct to local consumers or to retail vendors.
- (c) Such portion of the commodity as the grower may require for his own use as seed or for food for his family or his live stock; and
- (d) Such other sales and purchases or receipts of the commodity as may be prescribed or approved by the Minister."

It must be noted that these exemptions may be made on terms and conditions fixed by the Board or the Minister.

The Board does all the selling of the commodity, either through its own officers or through authorised agents. Payments are made on the same system as our H.P.A. uses; that is the pool system.

The Board also has power to call on producers to furnish returns of produce from time to time.

Next to the marketing powers, the most important power of the Board is its ability to make a levy on the commodity for any of several purposes, chief of which are establishing and maintaining an insurance fund against pests, fire, hail, flood, etc., a reserve fund, and a fund "for effecting any other special object which the Board may determine to be in the common interest of the growers of the particular commodity."

Clearly this last clause would allow for a levy for an advertising campaign to increase the demand for a commodity.

From a careful study of the Act it would seem that it embraces all that was attempted in the late marketing proposals of the H.P.A. It goes further, for it brings **every** producer into the field. It answers all the objections that were raised by the opponents of the contract. Those who said 75 per cent. was not enough, and those who were afraid of the after crop of beekeepers cannot do anything but support such an Act.

Beekeepers would do well to study the marketing problem from the Queensland angle with a view to getting the same system in use in New Zealand.

W. B. B.

Correspondence

Sir,—It was a great disappointment to me that the scheme for the local market fell through. I feel sure that there is no active opposition on the part of the majority of beekeepers, but that their non-action is simply due to a complacent feeling that the other fellow will carry the load, and things will be all the same in a hundred years, so why worry! Let's eat, sleep, and be merry, for to-morrow we die. Apparently our brother beekeepers have not that Kruschen feeling.

Now I fancy if we could get a volunteer from each district, armed with an agreement form in one hand and a bomb in the other, to interview each apiarist in his district, and get him to sign on the spot, we might yet achieve results. I would be willing, for one, to do my little bit in the Manawatu.

Another point is, why concern ourselves with folk who have but a few colonies? According to the agreement these people had as much voice in the matter, through being counted in assessing the percentage, as the man with 1500 colonies would have, and it is a sure bet that these small fry would not worry one iota which way the scale fell while the big man would worry a whole lot. As a suggestion, could we not vote on the matter on the basis of one vote for every ten colonies. In such a way the apiarist who depends on his bees for a livelihood would be enabled to sing a louder tune, and so he should.—I am, etc.,

W. D. STOUT.

Palmerston North.

To the Editor.

Sir,—I venture to write to you as a beekeeper who is still somewhat of a beginner. You as an experienced beekeeper find prices the most pressing topic, whereas I am still in the crude condition of wanting to know how to produce the article. Both are important, but I can see that the organised marketing scheme requires all the

backing that we as individuals can apply. If only your Journal could reach a greater number of producers, surely it would convince them. I can't understand why some quite prominent beekeepers haven't subscribed. Perhaps they want it made easy by being offered a printed form to fill in.

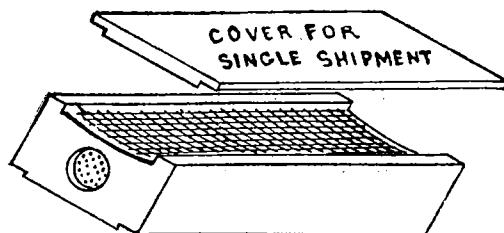
About prices. When I came to this district an established beekeeper told me he was selling clover honey from the door at 6d a pound, and had to because another man was selling at 6d. I also sold at 6d. This year, the crop being almost non-existent so far, I have decided to make the price 7d., and a consumer has just told me that he rather thinks a big customer of mine will go elsewhere. I quite agree with you that beekeeping is quite arduous enough in itself without that sort of thing on top of it.

The season here (Southland Central) seems to have been worse to date than in Canterbury. Three months on end have been below the normal in sunshine, and January the wettest for 46 years. I heard of a beekeeper who fed sugar at Christmas, and my bees were weaker at the New Year than six weeks previously. Should I have fed sugar during these six weeks?

In your January "Work for the Month," writing of F.B., you say that extracted combs from an F.B. hive, provided they have had no brood in them, can be used again after being cleaned up by the bees. Now, I have a difficulty in getting drip combs cleaned up perfectly. Although I place the empty supers above the mat, the bees tend to store the drips in a few cells here and there in some combs, and I don't know any means of inducing them to take that honey below. Thus there would be some danger of store combs not being entirely dry. Even if they were, might they still not be infected, seeing that hive bodies are supposed to be? I have always destroyed such combs. Even so, F.B. is a recurring curse, and I wonder what the previous owner of my apiary did.

I want to say that I find your page, "Work for the Month," quite the best thing I have struck, and earnestly hope that you will gain increasing support in your efforts for organised marketing.—I am, etc.,

BEE K.



The accompanying illustration was omitted from an article in the December issue entitled "A New Nailess Shipping Cage."

DENSITY OF HONEY.

The ripeness of honey depends on its density, or specific gravity. In America a honey that goes 12 pounds to the gallon is considered satisfactory. Their 60 lb. tin is called a 5-gallon tin, but here we call it a 4-gallon tin. Actually it holds 4 1-6 gallons. The American gallon holds 8 1-3 pounds water and the Imperial gallon 10 pounds. This little discrepancy led a beekeeper lately to work out the specific gravity of honey at 1.2, instead of 1.425.

Honey with a specific gravity of less than 1.420 is barred from sale or export. As a general rule honey that is fully sealed when extracted will be above the minimum, but if left exposed in tanks over a few days in a warm, moist atmosphere such as prevails in Auckland and Taranaki provinces, it will absorb moisture. The surface of the honey will then be low in density. A ton of honey at 1,400 loses 32 pounds of moisture in bringing it to 1.420.

In testing it for specific gravity the sample should always be drawn from the surface and not from the tap. The dense honey is at the bottom always. If the surface honey is low in density the last few tins run off will contain it, and the trouble that follows may condemn the whole line.

An ordinary hydrometer is a fairly accurate method of testing for specific gravity, but there is a margin of error on account of air bubbles in the honey. The viscosity of the honey also affects the reading; in other words, it takes considerable time for the hydrometer to settle in a sticky fluid. The most accurate method is to weigh a known volume of honey. Special bottles can be obtained which hold exactly 25 grammes of water at 15 degs. C. They are fitted with a glass stopper, through which a hole is bored. Using an apothecary's scale, the tare of the bottle is taken. Then it is filled with the honey (warm for convenience), and spun round in the extractor, neck inwards, to bring the air bubbles to the top. Then it is cooled down to 59 degs. F., and the stopper inserted firmly. The overflow is wiped off the little hole, and the weight of contents ascertained in milligrammes. The specific gravity can then be worked out to three places of decimals, and four if preferred.

I once had a tankful, about a ton, of late extracting not too well sealed, and the surface tested 1.407. I covered the tank with a piece of beaver board, so that there was an inch gap at one end. I lifted the other end, and stuck an electric griller, griller, minus the pans (a toaster

would do), in the opening. I connected this to a heating plug. Then I connected an Electrolux to a light point, took the fittings out and propped it against the griller so that it would blow across the hot wires into the tank. The current of air kept the wires from showing red, and presently I could feel warm air at the other end of the cover. I left it running all night, and took a test next morning. It worked out at 1.411. The next night it came up to 1.415, and a third night brought it over the standard of 1.420.

W. B. B.

"ACORN" Comb Foundation

"Good as the best, better than most."

PRICE LIST—SEASON 1929/30.

Medium Brood—25 lbs. and over, 3/2; 10 lbs., 3/4; 5 lbs., 3/6; 1 lb., 3/9 per lb.
Thin Super (26/28 sheets per lb.)—3 lbs., 4/3; 1 lb., 4/6 per lb.

YOUR OWN BEESWAX CONVERTED:

Medium Brood—25 lbs. and over, 8d. per lb.; 10 to 24 lbs., 10d. per lb.; under 10 lbs., 1/- per lb.

Thin Super—10 lbs. and over, 1/9 per lb.; under 10 lbs., 2/- per lb.

The above prices are nett cash, free on rail Christchurch or f.o.b. Lyttelton. Wax of superfine quality only will be accepted for conversion into Thin Super.

BEESWAX.—I am paying highest market rates for good Beeswax in any quantity. Write for quotation, stating how much you have for sale.

BEE SUPPLIES.—I can supply almost anything that the Beekeeper needs—Hives, Frames, Honey Tins and Cases, Honey Tanks, etc.

Write for Price List.

A. ECROYD

11 THORNTON ST, CHRISTCHURCH

NICHOLAS' COMB FOUNDATION FACTORY.

3 CALEDONIA ST., HAWERA.

WAX MADE UP AT CURRENT RATES.

FOR SALE.

500 EXPORT HONEY CASES. Machine cut from thoroughly seasoned White Pine. Ends double dressed. Price £35 the Lot, or 1/6 each, f.o.r. Greymouth.—T. HORNSBY, Clematis Bee Hive Factory, Cobden.

"The Bee World"—The leading bee journal in Britain, and the only international bee review in existence. Speciality: Reports of anything new in science or practice the world over. Specimen copy 6d. N.Z. stamps. The Apis Club, Brockhill, London Road, Camberley, Surrey, England.

Beeswax.

In the "Bee World" for December last Mr. H. H. Root, of Medina, raises a most important point in connection with the purity, and hence the value, of beeswax. He quotes from a pamphlet on "Beeswax" published by myself in 1920 in reference to the effect of propolis in beeswax. I was referring to the fact that propolis affects the colour and the aroma of the wax, but I missed the most important point—that the vegetable resins of propolis, combining with the wax, lower its melting point. Mr. Root quotes from "Canadian Chemistry and Metallurgy" for February, 1924, some interesting experiments carried out by T. P. Gladstone Shaw, M.A., Sc., on Canadian propolis, whereby he proves that white cappings wax melted in hot water in contact with propolis, combines with the resinous contents of the propolis, and acquired a melting point of 147 deg. F. instead of 150 deg. F.

Root says:—"Crude wax heavily contaminated with resinous gums can never be purified. When mixed with better wax containing less resin it injures it in flavour, aroma, consistency and melting point. There is no known process for separating resin from beeswax. Once together in solution, the two are united for ever; the injury is permanent."

Also—"A much larger proportion of resinous gum is deposited in the wax by the carelessness of the beekeeper. In the United States, at least, it is almost the universal custom when uncapping honey to scrape the frames and other fixtures over the receptacle holding the cappings. . . . Furthermore, when rendering old combs it is often the custom to throw the combs, frames and all into hot water, and melt the combs out of the frames. The propolis is thus melted off with the wax, contaminating the wax and lowering the melting point below the rather low melting point that brood comb wax usually has."

He says that in the United States comb foundation makers use probably only a tenth of the wax produced, the balance going to outside industries (amongst which he mentions polishes), for which beeswax of high melting point is not only needed but demanded. I can understand the importance of a high melting point to foundation makers, but I do not think the point is important for polish makers, neither should the presence of resins be deleterious. If anything, they should rather be an advantage.

However, now that attention has been drawn to the importance of keeping the wax free from propolis compounds, beekeepers should endeavour to improve the quality of their wax. To begin with the cappings, these should be kept free from propolis by scraping the top bars into another receptacle. I use wood mats with a bee space above the top bars, so I am not troubled with propolis on the top bars. The cappings wax from the electric capping melter is practically free from propolis. What propolis is in the cappings remains in the cloths, but when the slumgum is rendered and pressed to recover the last of the wax, the resins combine with the wax, for these blocks are distinctly tainted with propolis.

Burr combs and scrapings should all be rendered separately. In rendering old combs I have lately been steaming them off the frames. I close them down in a large wooden tank, and turn the steam on for 20 minutes or more. The combs fall down on to a rack and the wax falls below. Sometimes I have left it to cool, and found it to be a beautiful light yellow colour. But I have gathered up everything, and put it all through the copper boiler and then the wax press. The propolis was left on the frames, but a certain amount more would be on the combs, and this would combine with the wax and spoil its colour, for the colour of the final blocks was never as good as that which fell under the rack. Since reading Root's article I have come to the conclusion that it will pay to use a larger steam box, catch the slumgum on a wire cloth rack, and keep the wax which falls below separate, and render it again by itself in clean water. In this way I will get a higher percentage of first grade wax comparatively or perhaps almost free from propolis resin.

It seems inevitable in recovering all the wax from old combs that it will be contaminated by the propolis, but by working on the right lines a good proportion can be obtained in better condition.

Beekeepers should aim to keep each grade separate in the rendering. Hitherto buyers have not been particular in New Zealand, but it will not be long before beeswax will be bought on grade. A good proportion of the wax crop is exported, and it behoves us to set to work to build up a name for our New Zealand beeswax. The problem will be to find the market which will absorb the darker grade of lower melting point wax. I intend to

make enquiries from the polish makers to see whether this class of wax is suitable or perhaps more suitable for their requirements.

What would be a great boon to many of the smaller beekeepers would be a plant where they could send their cappings and combs to be rendered. In regard to the combs especially, the amount they have to deal with does not justify putting in the gear, while a large well-equipped plant could handle it on terms which should be advantageous to both parties.

W. B. BRAY.

"UNDER-DEMAND" FOR HONEY THE TROUBLE.

In the bright little publication called "Beecause," issued quarterly by the G. B. Lewis Co., we find this paragraph:—

"While we (honey producers) have suffered and called it 'over-production,' it has really been 'under-demand.' Honey production has had no sales outlet to force a price for it. If the American Honey Institute can sufficiently increase the use of honey we may see a rejuvenated industry from all angles. At least it is the first sensible non-partisan method offered

nationally within the writer's memory. It is an effort that deserves the support of all factions. Let's all give it our full support!"

We believe the above paragraph hits the nail right on the head.

But just **why** is there an "under-demand" for honey? Why don't people use more honey than they do? Well, there are many reasons why. In the first place, they don't know **how** to use it. We have told a good many folks about our "Wa-hon-tee" drink, and also the full meal we often make on honey, milk and bread. Nearly all to whom we have mentioned these two simple ways to use honey said, "Why, I never thought of that." Or, "I never heard of that before. I believe I'll try it."

Some other foods are advertised extensively, and the advertisements are constantly in newspapers and magazines. It must pay the firms putting out such foods or they would not keep on advertising them as they do. But honey has been mentioned only occasionally through advertisements. We believe the A. I. Root Co. used to offer honey through advertisements more than any other firm in America. But we suppose they got "tired," for it cost a lot of money, and at the low retail prices of honey in some parts of

Italian Queens

Re-Queen Now with stock that will get the goods for next season.

	1	2	3	4	5	10
Untested ..	7/6	14/-	20/-	26/6	32/-	60/-
Select Untested—	1/- extra per Queen.					
Tested ..	11/-	21/6	31/3	41/-	50/-	95/-
Select Tested	15/-	30/-				
Breeders ..	25/-					

Queens guaranteed free from all disease.

Delivery to 1st week in April.

Orders filled in rotation. P.O. Order Office, Crookston.

TERMS—Cash with Order—Cheques to have exchange added.

Postal Address—

R. STEWART

Crookston P.O., OTAGO

the country there is not enough profit in selling honey to meet the high cost of advertising. The price of honey must be raised, just as the prices of other foods have been put up, so that advertising costs can be met.

Then, as soon as the volume in honey sales have been reached, no doubt the price of honey can be lowered to some extent. But there is no need of doing a losing business in selling honey any more than in any other food. Does anyone suppose that Heinz foods or Campbell's soups are put on the market at a loss? No, of course not! Then why should not honey be high enough in price so that not only advertising expense can be met, but also pay the producers, the distributors and the retail grocers a fair profit? It will have to come to this sooner or later if the production of honey is ever to be a dependable business. And the right of advertising will help put it on that basis, we believe.

Yes, it will take a lot of money to start the kind of an advertising campaign that is needed. But some of these days there will likely arise a bunch of business men sufficiently experienced and capitalised to put over the plan that will win out. And when this does happen, then there won't be any "under-demand" for honey.—"Bees and Honey."

THE SEASON'S CROP.

At this date, 3rd February, in other years the honey flow is usually over, but this year it is still too early to say what the final result will be. In the late spring and early summer a fine dry spell was experienced. The bees came on in fine condition, and in many places the clover began yielding well. Early in December the weather broke, and continued so through December and January. It has been generally a very wet summer, and the continual rains, very heavy at times, have brought away a tremendous growth of grass. At the end of January there was more clover in evidence than at any time previously. Given even a short spell of fine weather, which seems to have arrived, considerable honey can yet be stored. It may be that in districts where the other grasses are too high the bees will have a short working life through the wear on their wings while seeking the clover amongst the long grass. This will have its effect on the crop.

Such is the general position. In particular, the results to date are as follows:—

In Southland, Otago, North Otago and Canterbury a fair average crop of

good quality clover honey is on the hives in spite of the broken weather. Clover is still plentiful. In the Catlins district the rata is in great bloom, and a large crop from this source is assured.

In Westland the rata bloom is very poor. It has been one of the worst seasons on record there, and the failure of the rata means practically no crop.

In Marlborough a good crop of white honey has been secured.

In the Wairarapa and Southern part of Hawke's Bay an average crop is on. The same applies to the Manawatu, but the further west one goes the lighter the crop, till in Taranaki round Mount Egmont the season is a total failure so far. In Northern Hawke's Bay and in Auckland Province the crop is from fair to good.

On the whole, a fair average crop is assured, with possibilities yet of a good crop, at least equal to last year.

Later.

From further information to hand it is too early to say that even a fair crop is assured; in the North Island especially the season has been very patchy, and though honey is still coming in, the quantity will not be equal to that of an early flow. The quality also is not so good.

At present it looks as if the total crop will not be nearly equal to last year's.

HONEY, AND HOW TO USE IT.

Honey is a delicious and nourishing food. Use it instead of sugar on porridge. Serve honey with hot scones, waffles, doughnuts, etc.

Cakes made with honey instead of sugar, or equal quantities of each, keep moist and fresh for a longer period than if only sugar is used.

Honey used to sweeten cream filling for cakes and tarts adds a delicious flavour.

Honey has such a high dietetic value that the price paid for it is never high. Eat honey and save money.

Children dote on honey. Give them honey at mealtime, and they'll not crave for other and injurious sweets between meals.

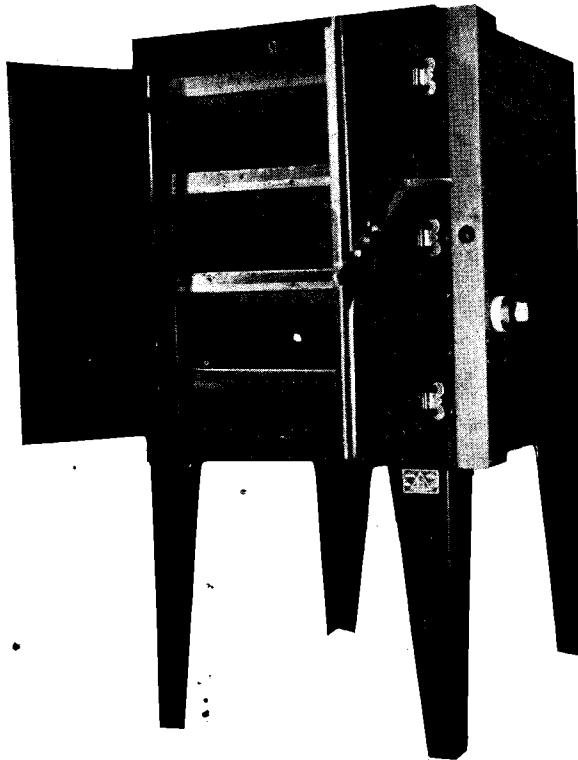
Honey contains iron, sodium and potassium for the blood. None of these is found in lollies and candies made from sugar.

Honey is a great energy producer. If you want energy, use honey morning and evening.

Honey saves our digestive machinery —sugar gives it lots of work.—"N.Z. New Health Journal".

The
Bray Electric Cappings Melter

The only Melter that does not impair the quality of the Honey.



BUY NEW ZEALAND
MADE GOODS

NOTE:—Trays and Separator Tank not shown in illustration.

The Oven can be used to liquefy honey in glass containers or to bring it to that brilliant clarity which helps to sell it. By removing one tray it can be used to liquefy six sixty-pound tins. We have only one machine in stock, so producers requiring one for this season should make early application. We have in stock also an oven one-third the capacity of the one illustrated. These melters are made with all British materials, the best obtainable, and are built to last for ever.

PRICE ON APPLICATION TO THE MAKERS.

BERRY & HALLIBURTON
165 MANCHESTER STREET, CHRISTCHURCH.